

Connections

March 2012

District Competitions Attract Local Innovators

by Jim Dickson

“Why didn’t I think of that?” It’s a common phrase each year at the department’s Innovations Challenge Showcase. With a total of 41 first-round winners, this year should be another great opportunity to share ways to get our jobs completed better, faster, cheaper and safer.

District competitions ran from November to the end of December with each district selecting as many as six innovations to be considered for the Innovations Challenge Showcase to be held April 10 in Spring-

field. District and Central Office coordinators will narrow the field to spotlight the very best innovations. And while not all the first-round winners will be chosen for the showcase, district innovators receive \$75 each with team submissions qualifying for up to \$450.

The categories for this year’s challenge are bridge maintenance, pavement maintenance, work zones and injury reduction. The statewide competition will begin the afternoon before the showcase as district



A participant shows the ingenuity behind a clamp that adjusts a tube’s diameter.



Attendees inspect various district innovations during the event.

employees set up equipment and displays to promote their innovations. A panel of district and Central Office reviewers will get an advanced showing of the innovations to select the top four innovations and the best of show. Criteria for the innovations include cost savings, safety, implementation, impact on the Five-Year

Direction and convenience or ease of use.

The four statewide winners will take home up to \$450 each with a maximum payout of \$1,550 per team. The top four innovations also earn an additional \$10,000 for the host district’s budget.

National Work Zone Awareness Week Spotlights Missouri

by Barrel Bob

My favorite time of the year, Work Zone Awareness Week, is set for April 23-27.

I’m even more excited than usual because a national spotlight will be aimed on MoDOT – specifically the St. Louis Area district.

On Monday, April 23, the national WZAW kickoff event will be held in the Route 141 construction zone in St. Louis.

My friend and cohort in safety, Jim Baron, the director of communications for the American Traffic Safety Services

Association said the national committee chose Missouri because, “We wanted to select a state that’s doing something wonderful that could be shared with the rest of the nation. We were really impressed with what the state is doing with work zone awareness.”

It’s enough to make a giant, orange mascot blush.

Why Highway 141? Don Hillis, assistant chief engineer explains, “This



Barrel Bob towers over a construction site where he informs motorists to slow down.

continued on page 12

Inside

2



Distractions
April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month

4



Digging
CO archaeologists recover artifacts at various sites

7



Transforming
KC District promotes Route 71 to interstate standards

9



Innovations
SL District prepares to face state competition

11



Flood
SE District works to fix flood damage on Route T

April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month

by DeAnne Rickabaugh

The results of a national NHTSA survey indicate that respondents say they are likely to answer calls on most trips. Further, they acknowledge few driving situations when they would not use the phone or text, yet they feel unsafe when riding in vehicles in which the driver is texting. Those surveyed also say they support bans on texting and cell phone use.

These seemingly contradicting attitudes are further evidence that distracted driving is a complex problem that is both hard to measure and difficult to address.

It won't surprise most road workers to learn that among the findings, drivers report that they rarely consider traffic situations when deciding when to use their phone.

What can you do to enhance your own safety? First, don't talk or text and drive. Second, speak up if you are the passenger of someone who reaches for the phone. Third, volunteer to answer the phone or text for the person who is driving.



Courtesy of Distraction.gov

Bashing Trash

by Sandy Hentges

Many signs of spring in Missouri are a sight for sore eyes. Tiny green shoots pushing through the frozen earth promise us warmer weather ahead. Unfortunately some other signs of spring aren't so welcome. After four or five months of cold outdoor temperatures that keep us indoors, litter begins to pile up. That's why it's a good thing April is the annual No MORE Trash! Bash so we can all get outside and spruce up our beautiful state.

The No MoRE Trash! Trash Bash is an annual event sponsored by the Missouri departments of Conservation (MDC) and Transportation (MoDOT) as part of their ongoing No MORE Trash! state-wide anti-litter campaign. During the entire month of April, efforts are aimed at getting people to clean up litter all across Missouri from roadsides, parks, neighborhoods, rivers, streams and other places.

"This is the 10th year of No MORE Trash! in Missouri," said Stacy Armstrong, MoDOT No MORE Trash! coordinator. "Through the years hundreds of thousands of volunteers have picked up more than half a million bags of trash just during the month of April," she said. "Now that's a lot of litter!"

MDC No MORE Trash! Coordinator Joe Jerek added that littering isn't just ugly, it hurts wildlife, costs Missourians millions of tax dollars each year, and it's illegal.

"Birds, fish, turtles and other animals get tangled in litter, such as plastic six-pack holders and fishing line, and it can kill them," Jerek explained. "Litter poisons fish, birds and other wildlife and can cost a litterer up to \$1,000 in fines and one year in jail."

MoDOT spends more than \$5 million each year cleaning litter from Missouri's roadsides, while MDC spends almost \$1 million a year to clean litter from conservation areas and other department locations.



Cathy Morrison

Adopt-A-Highway volunteers pick up trash along a busy Missouri highway.



Cathy Morrison

Placing flags and wearing reflective vests are a few of the important things to help provide a safe experience while cleaning up Missouri's roadways.

Last year more than 157,000 bags of trash and many more truckloads of debris were collected by thousands of volunteers during April. Volunteers included MoDOT and MDC employees, incarcerated crews, Adopt-A-Highway volunteers and Stream Team members, as well as many members of the public and community groups.

Each year the activities grow. Many educational efforts take place in schools, at rest areas, at community events, during Earth Day celebrations, on radio talk shows, news conferences, television promotions and more. Make plans now to participate.

Anyone can report their activity at www.nomoretrash.org.

nomoretrash.org and get a free lapel pin for their efforts.

"Besides the recognition, we all get a little exercise, some fresh air, and a cleaner place to work, live and play," Armstrong said.

For more information, visit www.nomoretrash.org.

Buckle Up Message Targets Teens

by Holly Dentner

Teenagers will tell you they’ve got a lot on their minds. Unfortunately, many don’t think at all about the risk of riding in a vehicle without a seat belt.

Surveys show that the seat belt usage rate for Missouri teenagers is significantly lower, at 67 percent, than the adult usage rate of 79 percent. Many teens believe that they’re invincible, that crashes won’t happen to them. Since they actually have the highest crash risk and lowest seat belt usage rate, feeling invincible can be very dangerous.

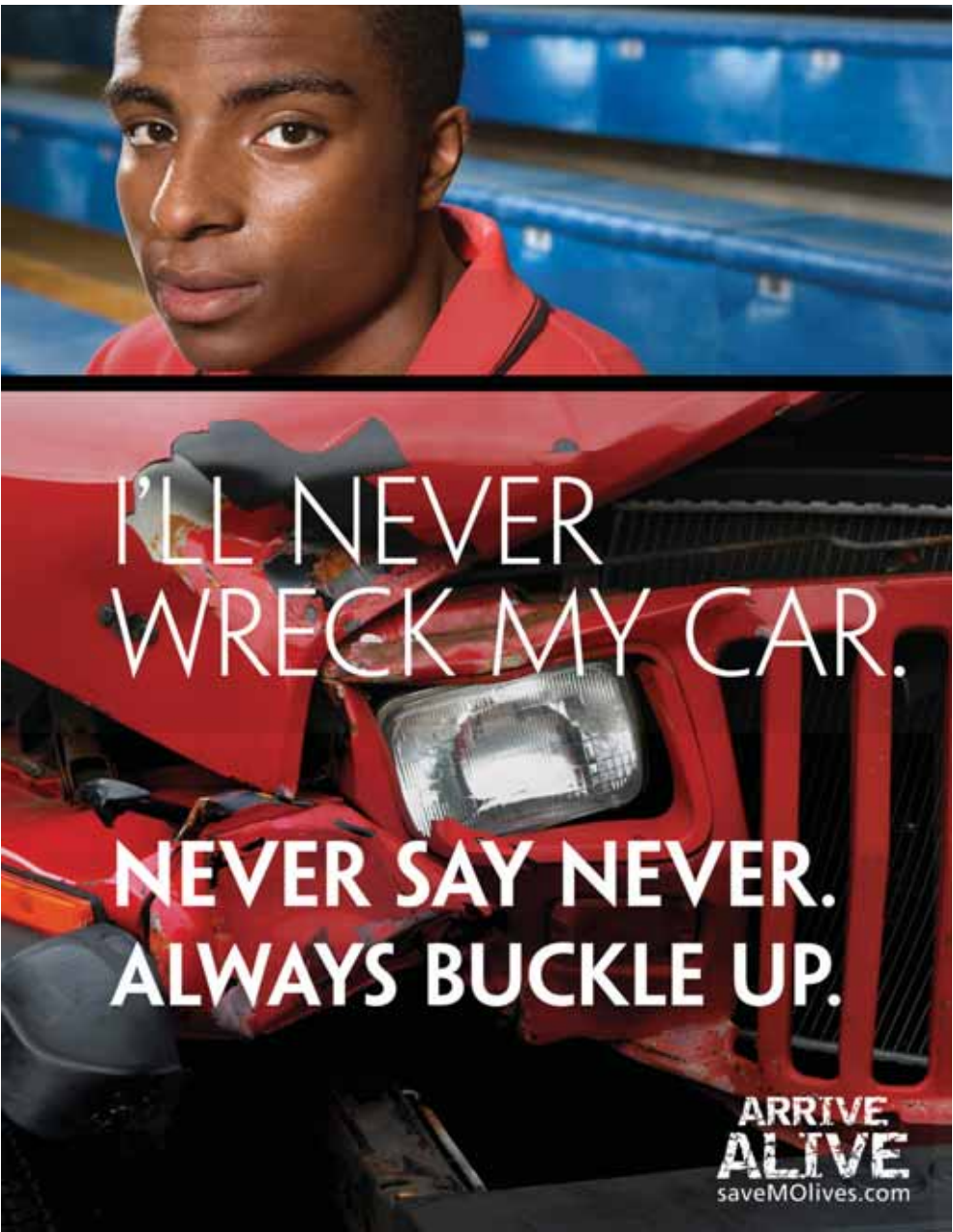
A campaign taking place in March will target teenagers and focus on reducing injuries and deaths among young drivers on Missouri roadways. The media component of the campaign will target teens through radio, television, and the Internet, including social media. It will feature the “Never Say Never” message, taking aim at the “it will never happen to me” attitude so many teenagers have. The campaign uses photos of crashed vehicles with phrases like “I’ll never wreck my car” and “I’ll never get hurt.”

Another component of the campaign involves the regional groups of the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety working directly with schools where students have seat belt usage rates under 50 percent.

“Our coalition partners will meet with school officials and student groups to discuss last year’s seat belt usage survey results,” said Carrie Wolken, Highway Safety Youth Coordinator. “We’ll offer support and options to schools with low usage rates to encourage students to buckle up.”

A few schools will be designated for a Seatbelt Spotter Day, where coalition volunteers reward students who they’ve spotted wearing a seat belt.

The March campaign will hopefully result in an increase in seat belt usage among teens. Another teen seat belt observation survey will take place in April to determine how successful these efforts have been.



March Service Anniversaries

30 Years

Steve A. Bradley	NE
Kevin P. Shannon	KC
Robert L. Gillaspie	KC

25 Years

Richard A. Knipp	KC
Kim I. Gordon	KC
Dennis D. Noblett	CD
Gregory D. Donoho	SW
James R. Allen	SE
Patricia D. L. Evans	SE
Gary R. Sager	SE

20 Years

Roger L. Anderson	NW
Orville D. Campbell	NE
Joseph B. Schulte	CD
Darrell B. Goth	SW
Sean L. Matlock	SW
Patricia R. Radley	SW
Howard L. Henderson	SW
Steven R. Howell	SW
Russel C. Huckaby	SW
Vicki L. Wells	SW
Darrel L. Hickman	SE
Jerry L. Friese	SE
Kenneth B. Adkins	SE
Jacob R. Bolinger	CO

15 Years

Rodney L. Milford	NW
Darrel D. Butcher	NW
Amy K. Bailey	CD
Donald E. Boettcher	CD
Christopher E. Scott	CD
Michael R. Bouse	CD
Dennis P. Hixson	SL
Cheryl D. Tucker	SL
Jason G. Aubuchon	SL
Christopher V. Calandro	SW
David A. Evans	SW

Johnny L. Hall	SW
James D. Mussulman	SW
Deborah Stuart	SW
Michael S. Whittaker	SW
Ricky L. Black	SW
Robert C. Thomason	SE
Michael K. Moon	SE
Randy W. Sanders	SE
Gary Overbey	CO
Thomas W. Fennessey	CO
Kevin D. Griep	CO

10 Years

Darren L. Weigel	NW
Jeremy E. Furr	NW
Sidney C. Brownell	NE
Donald J. Trivette	NE
Richard Murray	CD
Ryan M. Dingman	SW
Christopher N. Evers	CO

5 Years

Alex M. Kerwin	NW
Christopher J. Zdybel	KC
Luvinia V. Burnett	KC
Michael T. Walsh	KC
Eric R. Hahn	SL
Sandra Sloan	SL
Billy J. Barber	SW
David H. Colf	SW
Steven T. Hermann	SW
Jason L. Winkle	SE

January Retirements

Name	District	Years of Service
Clifford Palmer	NW	35
Gary Rush	NW	25
Roger Wittler	NW	33
Ronald Stewart	NW	16
Norma Wood	NW	27
Robert Stone	NW	26
Ronnie Clevenger	NW	24
Jerry Mckenzie	NW	29
John Cox	NW	32
Vicki James	NE	18
Robert Newman	NE	33
Matthew Watkins	NE	22
John Allred	NE	22
Robert Buckman	NE	17
Jerry Toland	NE	33
Gail Wilson	NE	22
Charles Bowles	NE	33
Jerry Miller	NE	33
Earl Barnard	NE	34
William Swiger	NE	28
Gerald Loges	KC	6
Thomas Singleton	KC	27
Russell Mitchell	KC	31
William Weitkamp	KC	30
Leslie Willard	KC	29
Ralph Tull	KC	30
Patricia Wilson	CD	36
Jennifer Ranabargar	CD	35
Dale Kurrelmeyer	CD	30
Donny Whittle	CD	37
William Maness	CD	11
Vincent Boillot	CD	33
Floyd Brown	CD	30
Paul Brown	SL	8
Kent Bequette	SL	33
Roy Scurlock	SL	29
Roy Sutter	SL	25
Kenny Lietch	SW	34
Everett Delozier	SW	33

Rex Foote	SW	32
Ward Jones	SW	34
Dana Garner	SW	28
Jimmy Compton	SW	26
Willie May	SW	26
Reuben Sanchez	SW	12
Janice Moore	SW	24
Thomas Buttry	SE	39
Thomas Ryan	SE	27
William Fox	SE	28
Ronald Ballew	SE	26
Keith Hendershott	SE	33
Connie Almond	SE	26
Ricky Bryant	SE	33
Gary Vaeth	SE	33
Roger Christensen	SE	26
Randall Grady	SE	28
Justin Cunningham	SE	27
Floyd Conway	SE	29
James Crutsinger	CO	14
Brenda Tyree	CO	7
Jack Huddleston	CO	36
Catherine Glover	CO	33
James Brocksmith	CO	35

In Memoriam

Retirees	Retired From:	
Roland Eades	Former D9	Jan. 3
William Van Arsdale	Former D10	Jan. 8
Billy Maddock	Former D1	Jan. 10
Genora Langan	CO	Jan. 11
Doneta Cornell	Former D1	Jan. 13
Larry Buzzard	Former D2	Jan. 19
Gilbert Deckard	Former D9	Jan. 21
Paul Cook	Former D7	Jan. 23
Hiram Jackson	Former D3	Jan. 29
Charles Weirich	Former D6	Jan. 29
Leonard Schmutzler	Former D5	Jan. 31

Central Office

Digging for a Story

by DeAnne Rickabaugh with Tana Akright / photos by Cathy Morrison

When I first started working at MoDOT, I was surprised to hear someone say they'd spoken with "one of our archaeologists."

What?

MoDOT is about highways and bridges, airports and barges, bikes, walkers, transit and the like. What was this nonsense about archeologists on staff?

I soon learned that historical research is a vital part of receiving federal funding and permits for construction and building projects. Funds aren't approved until MoDOT proves it complies with the National Historic Preservation Act.



Historic Preservation Specialist Tim Porter processes artifacts excavated in St. Louis, in advance of the Mississippi River Bridge project.

Tim Porter and Brianne Greenwood work in MoDOT's Historic Preservation unit. You can think of them as cold-case detectives. They piece together the stories of people and activities from prehistoric times to near-current day periods.

I recently found Tim processing artifacts excavated in St. Louis prior to the start of the earthwork for a new Interstate 70 Mississippi River bridge.

The excavated areas were formerly residential, commercial and industrial in nature. Evidence of foundries, factories, homes and parks was uncovered. Some

artifacts, like several bottles and a china doll, were brought to the historic preservation office for further study.

Piece by piece, Tim and his colleagues are telling the story of those who lived and worked in the area during the 1800s and early 1900s.

Brianne is processing artifacts recovered from



Intermediate Historic Preservation Specialist Brianne Greenwood analyzes material removed from a site near the North River Bridge in Marion County.

two sites near the 80-year old North River Bridge west of Palmyra.

The bridge, located on Route 168, is to be replaced this spring. Because it and nearby archaeological sites are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, data must be collected before construction could start.

Excavations at a site southeast of the old bridge believed to be dated 3000 to 1000 B.C. – known as the Late Archaic period – yielded evidence of people considered to be hunters and gatherers who did not raise crops.

A more recent encampment site located north of Route 168 dated between 500 and 850 A.D. Here, evidence was found

of groups of people living in structures much like wigwams, indicating they did not move around as much.

The result of this fascinating historical research not only ensures compliance with national regulations, but also demonstrates our efforts to remain a good steward of our state's cultural resources.

Details about our historic preservation efforts are available at www.modot.org/ehp.



A bottle and china doll head were recovered from an excavation area from the Mississippi River Bridge project in St. Louis.

Go Online for an External Training One-Stop-Shop

With the implementation of the Bolder Five-Year Direction, Human Resources Employee Development began a cost saving measure to outsource certain skills training, rather than providing training in-house.

4

Employees have probably noticed an increase in the volume of e-mails they have received as human resources staff communicated these external training opportunities and programs.

Instead of combing through e-mails, MoDOT employees can now review external training from the new employee development Intranet web page.

The web page now has a section titled "External Training Opportunities." Within this section you will find links to various external training resources, including:



FEMA (NIMS Courses) – Training programs related to security awareness and disaster.

Franklin Covey – Professional development training, consulting, and principle based programs.

Fred Pryor Seminars – Seminars, webinars, and audio conferences on topics ranging from standard software to management training.

Linn State Technical College – Facilitation of instructional classes customized to meet industry needs, including many certification programs relevant to MoDOT.

Missouri Training Institute – Professional development, management training, supervision training, human resource management, and custom designed training.

MOTEC – A location for state agencies to hold technical training and provides a clearinghouse for technical training information for Missouri state government employees.

National Training Seminars – Seminars held across the state and webinars offered in many different subjects.

Office of Administration, Center for Management and Professional Development – In addition to creating and providing customized programs and webinars, the Center offers a variety of additional programs developed by other world class training organizations.

Skillpath – Seminars, audio conferences, and webinars on an array of topics.



MoDOT's employee development division is committed to continually seek external training resources to meet employee needs. When new resources are discovered, they will be added to the resource list on the web page.

In the meantime, if you have any suggestions on possible external training resources to support our Bolder Five-Year Direction's outsourcing initiative, we would greatly appreciate your input.

Please visit MoDOT's employee development Intranet web page (<http://wwwi.intranet/hr/hred/>) to check the external training resources provided to support your developmental needs and enhance your skill set.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact the Employee Development staff at 573-751-3941.

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Northwest District

Building Bridges in the Classroom

by M. Elaine Justus



Shelly Aebersold

Sr. Traffic Studies Specialist José Rodríguez was joined by Sr. Traffic Specialist Terry Glidewell and Sr. Highway Designer Brian Rosenthal in making the presentation.

On Friday, February 3, three intrepid MoDOT employees took their “show on the road” to St. Joseph Christian School’s 5th grade class. The class was just completing a unit study of structures, and MoDOT had been invited to deliver the final presentation of the series. Using a PowerPoint presentation and a software program called “West Point Bridge Builder,” they were able to both educate and offer a hands-on experience to 18 students.



Shelly Aebersold

The classroom was fascinated by José’s PowerPoint presentation.

Senior Traffic Studies Specialist José Rodríguez, Senior Traffic Specialist Terry Glidewell and Senior Highway Designer Brian Rosenthal made the actual presentation while Senior Customer Service Representative Shelly Aebersold photographed the event.



Shelly Aebersold

After the PowerPoint, the students broke up into small groups to design and test their own bridges.

“We usually make these types of presentations at least once a year,” Rodríguez said. “The kids really seem to get involved with the hands on aspect of the design portion.”

After having types of bridges explained in the PowerPoint, and being shown examples of the types, students were divided into smaller groups where they gathered around a laptop and used the Bridge Builder program to design their own bridge.

“It’s especially fun to watch the students go through the engineering process following the design portion,” Rodríguez said. “They have to calculate the cost and stability of their design, and, occasionally, watch their design fail.”

The Bridge Builder program is designed to use the students data to actually “create” a bridge, then test it. If it fails structurally, the program also provides information about why the failure occurred and how it can be fixed. It also helps the students understand how balancing design with cost is a huge and important part of any project.

Grant Awards Distributed

by M. Elaine Justus

This year, a new grant application program was implemented in the Northwest District in cooperation with area regional planning commissions. Applications were made available to

schools, law enforcement, etc. and all submissions were reviewed and scored by members of the region’s Blueprint Coalition. Seventeen applications were received, and 10 were approved.



Holly L. Hailey

On behalf of the Andrew County Sheriff’s Office, Officer Amy Stoner accepted three radar guns from Asst. District Engineer Tony McGaughy.



M. Elaine Justus

Through the grant process, the Buchanan County Sheriff’s Office received five sorely needed radar guns. Area Engineer Michael Rinehart made the formal presentation to Captain Mike Babcock.

New Commuter Lot Open in Northwest Missouri

by Melissa Black

A new commuter lot opened in Northwest Missouri will help travelers keep a few extra dollars in their pockets. With high gas prices and traffic congestion in some areas, it is always a great time to consider carpooling. That is why MoDOT offers more than 6,000 spaces statewide to help save gas money, and wear and tear on vehicles. Several of those spaces are available right here in Northwest Missouri.

“Sometimes folks don’t realize the lots are free and open to the public,” says Don Wichern, Northwest District Engineer. “Anyone can park their vehicle in our commuter lots to share a ride with another driver and save money.”

The newest lot is about a quarter mile from the intersection of U.S. Highway 65 and Route H in Livingston County and will provide an additional 10 parking spots for commuters in the area. In the Northwest District, there are more than 200 spots in eight different

locations for drivers to park and share resources.

MoDOT’s commuter parking lots provide a reasonable solution for motorists wanting to save cash, reduce traffic congestion and help the environment by reducing emissions. Carpooling can save the average driver \$300-\$1,000 per year.

MoDOT maintains more than 100 commuter lots throughout the state, most of which are conveniently located near interstates or major highways. Many of the parking areas are located in the state’s metropolitan communities.

A list of commuter parking lots statewide can be found on MoDOT’s Northwest website at: www.modot.org/northwest. The Missouri Department of Natural Resources’ Energy Center also offers information about carpooling programs at www.morideshare.org or 1-800-361-4827.

5



Eula Morrow

Construction continues on the new Amelia Earhart Memorial Bridge across the Missouri River in Buchanan County.

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Northeast District

No Snow...Bridges A Go

Last year on January 23, northeast Missouri was a winter wonderland. In 2012, there is little snow and winter weather to hamper progress on the Safe & Sound Bridge Program. This year, on January 23, the first bridge project got underway on Route 168 just west of Philadelphia, and, to date, the bridge replacement is on schedule, with a big thanks to Mother Nature.

While this bridge was the first to get underway, soon after, two more bridges were closed for replacement. So far, minimal negative feedback has been provided by Missouri drivers. “Since the bridge program has been underway for a few years now, and we have made extra efforts to inform key people about the road



The Route 168 bridge over North River west of Philadelphia was the first bridge to be replaced on the Safe & Sound Bridge Program in the NE District this year.

closures, we are hearing primarily positive comments about the fact that they’re getting new bridges,” said MoDOT’s Northeast District Construction and Materials Engineer Macy Rodenbaugh. The NE District has 24 bridges to complete this year on the Safe & Sound Bridge Program.

Sunny Days for Road Work

From cleaning out ditches, working on shoulders, even pothole patching, maintenance crews took advantage of the 60 degree-plus weather to help improve minor roads. “We would have done a lot of the same if it were cold, but it sure makes for better working conditions when the sun is shining and the weather is warm,” said Kirksville Maintenance Supervisor Monte Fisher. Monte remembers many years when the same type of work was being performed in sub-20 degree weather.

Farther south about 160 miles, the weather also has made a difference in what the crews have been able to accomplish. “It’s nice not having to worry about frost bite!” Gary Peasel of Warrenton maintenance jokingly comments. The southernmost crews have been able to do a lot of erosion control, drainage work, as well as

other routine maintenance. “Many of these things have to normally wait until after winter, but we’ve been lucky this year,” Peasel added. District Engineer Paula Gough adds that it is important to have our priority work identified and planned so we can be ready to take full advantage of the nice weather.



Monte Fisher, Kevin Brawner and other Kirksville maintenance crew members took advantage of unseasonable weather to fix some shoulders along Route 11.

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Around the District...



MoDOT experts have been sharing their knowledge throughout the NE District with various audiences. (Left) Kim Trainor, P.E., Design, participated in the Van-Far High School A+ Science and Technology Fair as a guest speaker. (Right) Natalie Roarke, bidding and contract services engineer, held a workshop in Kirksville for contractors about doing business with MoDOT.



The EAEC of the NE District asked for participation in an “after the holidays” food drive. More than 1,000 food items were delivered to Douglass Community Center and a food bank in Macon to help families through the winter. Pictured are EAEC Chairperson Mike Laks, DCC Director Dan Whelan, and MoDOT Highway Designer Joe McNeill unloading the truck.



New Cambria crews have taken advantage of the nice weather to replace tubes. Pictured are Lori Wallace, Mike Hulett, Russel Gander and Jim Carriker.



(Above) Marion County R-2 High School was this year’s winner of the regional Battle of the Belt competition. (Left) Tessa Williams, HR, and Tana Akright, CR, distributed seat belt and no texting and driving information to 600 kids at the Teen Task Force Health Fair in Hannibal.

Kansas City District

Improvements Peak Interest of Kearney Residents

Plans Unveiled for Route 92

by Kerri Lewis

What will improve safety, relieve congestion, and allow for economic development in Kearney? Improvements to Route 92 between east of I-35 and Nation Road.

The KC District has been working closely with the City of Kearney to develop a plan for improving this busy section of roadway. Currently a two-

lane road carrying more than 4,500 vehicles per day, Route 92 faces traffic congestion and capacity issues. The road has become obsolete, no longer able to support the growing needs of the city. Traffic projections over the next several years show traffic increasing from around 1,400 vehicles per hour at peak times to 3,400. So, MoDOT worked closely with city offi-



At the Route 92 public hearing in Kearney, Mark Fisher, Project Manager, shows residents what improvements they can expect at the Route 92 and I-35 Interchange. More than 50 people stopped by the meeting to learn about improving Route 92.

cials to decide the best solution to address the needs of the community.

A public hearing on Tuesday, January 24 unveiled the preliminary plans for improving Route 92. More than 50 people stopped by to see the proposed improvements.

The proposed solution will widen the road to four lanes with turn lanes, creating a 5-lane section of roadway from just east of I-35 to Sam Barr Road. This will minimize congestion and enhance safety along this busy roadway. A designated lane for turns will allow vehicles to safely pull out of the driving lanes to make a turn while through traffic continues to move along Route 92.

Proposed improvements also include building an additional westbound lane underneath the bridge at I-35. Sidewalks will be added along the south side of Route 92, and the section between Sam Barr Road and Nation Road will receive significant safety enhancements including a roundabout at Route 92 and Sam Barr Road and at Route 92 and Nation Road. The hills along this section will also be cut down to improve sight distance.



Ryan Hale, Design, shows where the signal at Route 92 and Sam Barr Road will be replaced with a roundabout to slow traffic and improve safety.

Several people left the meeting feeling certain that the enhancements would improve the road overall. "I think it is good to finally use roundabouts," said one attendee. Another was eager to see the signals removed and roundabouts added to slow traffic through the busy intersections. "I have seen a number of severe accidents here and think a roundabout will make it safer."

With support of the city and community, MoDOT will move forward with final plans. Construction is scheduled to begin as early as spring 2013.

Bridges in Cass County Are Key in Transforming Route 71 to I-49

by Steve Porter

Route 71 south of Kansas City is getting a promotion – to I-49. It won't happen overnight, but by the end of this year, changes south of Harrisonville will improve Route 71 to interstate standards.

The KC District's team of Resident Engineer Tom Markway, Assistant Resident Engineer Matt Haug, Senior Construction Inspector Albert Janssens and Intermediate Construction Inspector Wade Hildenbrand are overseeing the project in Cass County. This winter, work is already under way to eliminate at-grade intersections on Route 71 south of Route 7. They are the last of more than 20 at-grade intersections between I-44 near Carthage and Route 7 in Harrisonville to be eliminated.

MoDOT has placed a Web cam near the highway so that the public can monitor progress on these important changes. Go to <http://oxblue.com/pro/open/modot/I49> for up-do-the-moment views of work at 307th Street. We've also placed a Web page on the MoDOT Website (www.modot.org/kc) to continually provide information about these improvements. Click on Route 71 to I-49 in the Featured menu.

In Cass County, the crossings at 283rd and 327th will be replaced by bridges over Route 71, with no access to 71. The crossing at 307th will be built as a full interchange. Radmacher Construction Co. has been awarded the contract for all three. These new overpasses will be completed by the end of 2012. It is all part of a broader effort by Louisiana, Arkansas and Missouri to complete I-49 from New Orleans to Kansas City.



Work begins on the interchange at 307th Street to upgrade Route 71 to I-49. The work in Cass County is the last of the interchanges needing to be upgraded.

MoDOT is nearly finished with work on Route 71 from I-44 north to the Bates/Cass county line. Four interchanges south of Cass County funded through \$26.9 million of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act are now completed.

While elimination of three at-grade intersections are the only major changes necessary to raise Route 71 to interstate standards in the Kansas City District, other improvements preceded, are under way or will begin

along the corridor from Harrisonville to Kansas City. In the last few years along the Route 71 corridor MoDOT has untangled the Triangle interchange, reconstructed Route 150 interchange to a single-point urban interchange, reconstructed 163rd Street interchange, and added a new North Cass Parkway interchange at 187th Street. This year MoDOT will re-deck the Routes J/C interchange in Peculiar and next year will replace the 291 interchange in Harrisonville with a diverging diamond.

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Central District

Celebrating Two New Bridges in Howard County

On Tuesday, January 24, MoDOT joined local officials to celebrate the completion of two bridge replacements on Route 240 in Fayette. The ribbon-

flow, are located just west of Route 124. The previous structures were built in 1932. Both were completely replaced, one half at a time, in order to allow



Scott Smith

Fayette resident Bill Lay cut the ribbon at the conclusion of the ceremony. Lay was a member of the local transportation advisory committee and was a vocal supporter of the project.

cutting ceremony was open to the public, with about 20 people in attendance.

The two bridges, over Bonne Femme Creek and Bonne Femme Creek Over-

Howard County,” said Area Engineer Mike Schupp.

traffic to continue to use Route 240 during construction.

The bridge closest to Route 124 was also widened to accommodate a left-turn lane for vehicles turning from Route 240.

“We are very pleased to be able to replace two bridges along this major route in



Kristin Gerber

The Bonne Femme Creek Bridge



Kristin Gerber

The Bonne Femme Creek Overflow Bridge

“We appreciate the support received from the community while work was underway.”

The \$1.87 million project began in June 2011 and was completed in November 2011. Widel, Inc. of Blackwater, Mo. was the contractor for the work.

Springing Into Safe & Sound Bridge Work

The 2012 Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Program construction season in the district got underway in early 2012 with work in Maries County on the Route 28 bridge over Dry Fork Creek.

“The Dry Fork Creek Bridge was in very poor condition and we had been regularly monitoring its condition to keep it safe for travel,” said MoDOT District Design Engineer Nicole Hood. “We are pleased to get this work underway to reduce the amount of continued maintenance that was being performed on the structure.”

With 29 bridges scheduled for replacement in the Central District within the next six months, the district has been busy getting ready and making sure the public is involved and ready for the upcoming closures.

Three community briefings were held in February to help inform residents in Cole, Callaway and Osage Counties of construction taking place in those counties. Another briefing will be held in Gasconade County later this spring.

“We are geared up and ready for work,” said Hood. “When the program is com-



Nicole Hood

Central District Safe & Sound Coordinator Susan Ball discusses upcoming bridge replacements with residents in Osage County.

pleted, Safe & Sound will have helped us to improve the condition of about 90 bridges in Central Missouri and more than 800 statewide; that’s exciting.”

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Snow Business

As the state observed President Lincoln’s Birthday on February 13, MoDOT maintenance crews were hard at work plowing and treating state highways during the season’s first major snow event.

The storm affected every region of the state with snowfall totals ranging from 1 to 5 inches.

“The storm moved into our region in the early morning hours and lasted throughout the day,” said Assistant

District Maintenance Engineer Jason Shafer. “We have a strong team. Our maintenance crews were out and ready. Our Emergency Operations staff was in the office providing great support to the field and to the traveling public by responding to emergencies, answering calls and updating the Traveler Information Map.”

Warmer temperatures on Valentine’s Day helped return conditions to near normal.



James Williams

Fill ‘er up! Across the district, loader operators kept MoDOT trucks filled with materials needed to treat state highways.



James Williams

Route 40 in Boone County is plowed and treated.

St. Louis District

Six District Innovations Winners Advance to State

by Kara Price

Six of the 26 district entries in the 2011 Innovations Challenge will advance to the statewide competition in April. Each winning employee will receive a \$75.00 award.

“Thank you to all employees who submitted entries for this year,” said Judy Wagner, district coordinator of the Innovations Challenge.



“Portable Detour Signs” (Dan Cronin) is a district winner for 2011.

District winners include:

- **Dan Cronin** - Built a large portable directional detour sign. The sign is free-standing, so locates are not needed. The plaques can be changed depending on the detour.
- **Teri Feller & Patricia Miller** - Painted lines on the floor of the garage bays to be used to guide the driver when backing and/or pulling forward into the garage bay.



“Painted Lines” entry (Teri Feller & Patricia Miller) will compete in the statewide competition.

- **Steven Fisher** - Created the blade raiser, which is a modified two-wheel dolly to simplify installation of blades to the snowplow and motor grader. This is now a one-man operation with little lifting required.
- **Frank Tidd & Kevin Golden** - Entered a process to screen “free” cinders to remove the 3/8” pieces and larger to be used for edge rut material. The cinder fines are then used for snow removal. The 3/8” material used for edge ruts on minor roads has proven over the past two years to remain in place without erosion.
- **Timothy Werner & Nathen Cheshire** - Constructed a dump basket, which is made out of steel and plywood that can be attached to a winch on the basket truck. This allows the items to be moved from under the bridge to the top without lifting and carrying on uneven ground.

- **Tom Stratman, Keith Pehle, Kevin Peters, James Morris & Ronald Williams** - Constructed a telescoping shoring leg for repairing bridges. In the past, bridge maintenance would have to fabricate a custom shoring leg for each project height. This leg is adjustable to whatever height is needed. This leg can hold up to 40 tons of pressure, which covers a wide range of bridges in the state.

St. Louis Employees Join Welcome Home Heroes Parade

by Kara Price

MoDOT’s Military/Employee Affinity Group participated in the *Welcome Home Heroes* parade held in late January in downtown St. Louis. Approximately a dozen MoDOT employees

and their family members rode on the MoDOT sponsored float in the parade. Thank you to our military employees for your service to our country.



MoDOT’s Bill McLaughlin, senior highway designer, and Kathy Anderson, Chesterfield senior construction inspector, wave to parade supporters.

COMTO Enhances St. Louis Partnerships in Transportation

by Kara Price

St. Louis recently welcomed the Conference on Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO) to help strengthen transportation partnerships in the region.

COMTO’s President and CEO, Julie Cunningham, met with local and statewide political representatives, the Missouri Department of Transporta-

table job creation on federally funded projects. The Mississippi River Bridge project is currently using best practices from the *Missouri Model*.

“I think it means that multi-modal transportation in the St. Louis region is now developing collaboration across all modes of transportation,” said Shirllyn Myles, St. Louis COMTO chapter



COMTO President and CEO (left) addresses the importance of creating opportunities for small businesses to St. Louis community leaders (right), including the Missouri Department of Transportation.

tion, heads of the multimodal agencies, and local women and minority-owned businesses while visiting St. Louis. Cunningham is also the community roundtable facilitator for the New I-64 and Mississippi River Bridge projects.

COMTO highlighted the *Missouri Model*, which is the I-64 Workforce Diversity initiative that made Missouri a national model for effective equi-

president and community liaison at MoDOT.

COMTO seeks to continue advancing the *Missouri Model* nationally and locally. It is pushing U.S. Congress to include the model in the next long-term Transportation Authorization Act. COMTO has begun discussions with the Obama Administration on how to use the *Missouri Model* in its job creation tools.

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Southwest District



Southwest District at Work

- 1. Osceola Intermediate Crew Worker Matt Hughes is part of a crew repairing approaches along St. Clair County Route A west of Lowry City.
- 2. Adjusting traffic signal timing at the new Diverging Diamond Interchange at Route 248/65 in Branson is Senior Traffic Studies Specialist Mike Bock.
- 3. Plowing snow on Route 65 south of Springfield is Ozark Maintenance Crew Leader Tim Pogue.
- 4. Among district officials taking part in the Southwest District Planning Workshop in Springfield is Branson-based Area Engineer Beth Schaller, center.

Improving Road Surfaces Will Keep District Busy in 2012

by Angela Eden

The Southwest District’s updated pavement management plan will provide plenty of work in 2012 on major roads. In addition, extensive maintenance work is scheduled this year on many minor roads.

“It’s important to keep our major roads in good condition because they carry most of the traffic,” District Engineer Becky Baltz said.

“We will continue to do pavement treatments on our minor roads to keep them in as good condition as we can with the funds we have available.”

Game Plan for Major Roads

The “Major Road Pavement Plan,” now covering all 21 counties of the Southwest District, contains a seven-year cycle of surface treatments, either resurfacing for asphalt pavements or diamond-grinding for concrete.

The district’s 1,032 miles of major roads carry 75 percent to 80 percent of the traffic. They are the interstate highways, freeways, expressways, major arterial streets and regionally significant two-lane roads.

Assistant District Engineer Dan Salisbury said the pavement plan is designed to keep the highest traffic volume routes in good shape. It also reduces repair problems on those roads, freeing up maintenance crews for other needs.

Thin-lift overlays prescribed for some roads will prolong the life of those roads, Salisbury said.

“We’re building up the structure of the pavement,” he said.

The goal is to get the major roads on a resurfacing rotation so they don’t deteriorate to the point where they require significant improvements.

The pavement plan also helps determine how much the district must set aside each year to spend on major roads, Salisbury said.

Among the major roads getting a new driving surface this year are Interstate 44 between Joplin and Sarcoxie, Route 37 between Monett and the Missouri-Arkansas state line, Route 71 between Neosho and Pineville, Kearney Street Route 744 between Kansas Expressway and Glenstone Avenue in Springfield and Route 65 between Ozark and Branson.

field and Route 65 between Ozark and Branson.

Maintaining Minor Roads

The Maintenance approach to taking care of 5,509 miles of lesser-traveled two-lane roads in 2012 will include chip seals, cold-mix partial overlays and fog-sealing.

Ahead of the surface work, maintenance crews have been repairing roadway edges, replacing deteriorating drain pipes and repairing approaches.

“There will be partial (cold-mix asphalt) overlays all over the place,” District Maintenance Engineer Michael Middleton said.

Plenty of chip-seals are scheduled as well, he said – some by district maintenance forces and others by contractors.

Pavement conditions on minor roads are evaluated each year, Middleton said. The limited funds available are used for pavement treatments where the most immediate needs are found.

More needs develop year to year than can be addressed, and that makes devising a multi-year cycle for pavement treatments difficult to do, he said.

Much-needed partial cold-mix overlays are planned this year in Henry County to preserve Routes M and N. Among roads being chip-sealed are Route 7 between Warsaw and Climax Springs, Route 76 between Kisse Mills and

Major Roads Plan (1,032 miles)

- \$20 million a year in seven-year rotation set aside for surface work on major roads
- The number of miles of major roads to receive pavement treatments in 2012 is still being determined

Minor Roads Plan (5,509 miles)

- \$9.3 million in 2012 to chip-seal/partial overlays/fog-sealing minor roads
- 180 miles of chip-seals by contractors
- 145 miles of chip-seals by district maintenance
- 330 miles of partial cold-mix overlays
- 180 miles of fog-sealing

Hollister, Route 37 between Monett and Sarcoxie, Route 97 between Greenfield and Route 32 south of El Dorado Springs and Route 18 between Adrian and a point east of Ballard.

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South District

Henry McCoy's Path to MoDOT

Many different paths lead employees to successful careers at MoDOT, but most are not as notable as the event that brought Henry McCoy and his family to the Southeast District.

One morning in August 2005 in Kenner, La., the McCoy family was preparing for a church picnic. Linette, Henry's wife, received a call from her grandmother to discuss the approaching storm and evacuation.

"Living in Louisiana, we were accustomed to severe storms," said Henry. "But this time the Lord told me to pack up and leave with my family."

Henry explained he had never evacuated before, although his wife and three sons evacuated for Hurricane Ivan.

The McCoy family, along with members of their extended family and their pastor's daughter, began the trip to safety in Jackson, Miss.



Henry McCoy recently completed two sign language videos to assist employees across the state in learning basic signs.

After fighting through hours of traffic, the family was told there were no available hotel rooms. But the hotel owner called and made arrangements for the family at a Baptist church in Flora, Miss. The family stayed in the church's youth center as Hurricane Katrina hit, devastating their home and leaving them unable to communicate with their family and friends.

"While the devastation was unimaginable, we always have faith in God's plan for us and believe that everything happens for a purpose," said Henry.

While staying at the church in Flora, the McCoy family heard members of Sadler Chapel, a church near Dexter, Mo., were reaching out to families impacted by Katrina. Although Flora was going to assist Henry with tools and equip-

ment to restart his concrete finishing business, the mention of the small, rural church and community gained the family's interest.

"At first, I was hesitant to leave Flora," said Henry. "But I asked the Lord what to do, and He wanted me to go to Dexter." The McCoy family decided to start a new life in Missouri.

When the McCoy family arrived, Sadler Chapel had their home stocked with their favorite foods and clothing. Henry described that the family received a very warm welcome in the community.

"We didn't have any family or friends in Missouri when we first moved to Dexter," he said. "We are so blessed and thankful for everyone who helped us start our new life."

Henry specifically mentioned the Walkers, who helped the family come to the Southeast region. Henry's first job in Missouri was with Walker Construction in Dexter, Mo.

In 2006, Henry joined the MoDOT team. He currently works in the Southeast District's General Services department.

"Henry is one of those employees that no matter what he faces, he keeps a positive attitude," said General Services Manager Jacky Traw. "He always stays focused on the task at hand and takes pride in his work."

In addition to his attitude and work ethic, Henry also brings his extensive knowledge of sign language to the Southeast District.

"Some employers wouldn't hire me because of my hearing," said Henry. "But the Lord made a way for me, and I am thankful for the variety of things I do at MoDOT."

Recently, he completed two videos to illustrate common signs to MoDOT employees.

"All people want to be safe on the roadway, and employees need the ability to help deaf and hearing impaired individuals," he said.

The sign language videos are available online at: <http://youtu.be/DMFfaTZh-MtY> and <http://youtu.be/CAR27uJv1WI>.

SE Works to Repair Flood Damage

MoDOT, Corps Develop Plan for Route T

During spring 2011, hundreds of roadways were closed throughout the Southeast District due to rising floodwaters. Route T near Lake Wappapello in Wayne County received some of the most significant damage, as it

washed out due to rising lake levels and use of the emergency spillway.

A temporary crossing is currently in place, but with the help of community members and county leaders, MoDOT and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are looking for a more permanent solution.

The Corps has requested MoDOT refrain from constructing or placing structures in the transition area.

With the restrictions presented, there is not a fiscally responsible way to bridge the transition area.



A portion of Route T at Lake Wappapello washed out due to rising lake levels and use of the emergency spillway.

Considering the alternative options, MoDOT will replace the washed out section with a channel crossing below the transition area. The best solution is to locate the roadway crossing 650 feet downstream from the spillway. The new roadway will have a curved alignment similar to that of the existing temporary crossing but with a greatly improved vertical alignment. The new roadway will accommodate oversized vehicles.

For additional information, please visit: http://www.modot.org/southeast/news_and_information/public_meetings/index.htm.

McGee Honored With Sign Dedication

Missouri Attorney General Chris Koster and Representative Shelley Keeney, along with Clive Sherman McGee's family and friends, recently joined to celebrate dedicating a highway to McGee.

Representative Shelley Keeney sponsored the legislation, naming Highway 34 in Bollinger County from Glenallen to the intersection of Routes 34 and 51 in Marble Hill the Clive Sherman McGee Memorial Highway. The ceremony was held on Feb. 10 at the Marble Hill United Methodist Church.

McGee, born in 1917 near Glenallen, Mo., was the city marshal of Lutesville and a deputy sheriff of Bollinger

County. McGee was killed in the line of duty during a traffic stop in 1971.

Koster explained that he was only 8 years old when McGee lost his life protecting the people of Missouri.

"I had the luxury of my innocence back then because brave men, most of whom I will never meet, were willing to put themselves between me and the monsters of this world—brave men like Deputy Sheriff Clive McGee," he said.

To view videos and photos of the event, please visit: http://www.modot.org/southeast/news_and_information/special_events/index.htm.



Family and friends join to honor Clive Sherman McGee and celebrate the memorial highway sign dedication.

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Connections

The mission of *Connections* is to be a monthly source of Missouri Department of Transportation news and feature articles that connect employees statewide. It is distributed to MoDOT employees and retirees.

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Additional copies are available upon request. Suggestions, questions and comments are always welcome.



Please share this publication and recycle it after reading.

Mission

Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri.



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Don't Try Your Luck Drinking and Driving

The fabled "Luck of the Irish" will not be with anyone this St. Patrick's Day if they drink and drive. Law enforcement will be out in full force cracking down to arrest drunk drivers March 17 & 18.

For the past several years our folks in blue have set



up sobriety checkpoints and put forth a statewide effort to keep motorists safe by getting DWI offenders out of the driver's seat.

Have fun this St. Pat's day by celebrating without alcohol, or designating a driver before you go.

Recycling Efforts Score Successful Year

by Rob Didriksen

Fiscal Year 2011 proved to be a very successful year for state government recycling efforts with many opportunities for progress in the year ahead.

I thank each of you for your contributions to waste reduction and recycling over the past year.

Whether you were able to participate in big ways by coordinating an office-wide clean up or in simpler ways such as being the advocate for recycling in your office, your efforts are appreciated and together our actions have produced impressive results.

You can view the recycling report at <http://oa.mo.gov/purch/recycling/fy11annualreport.pdf>.

I hope you will share this information with employees in your department,

especially those people who were tasked with submitting an annual recycling questionnaire. The combined results of those questionnaires appears in this report.

A special thank you to the Environmental Improvement Energy Resources Authority for providing the graphic for this year's report cover.



Celebrating Black History Month

On Thursday, MoDOT, along with the Office of Administration and the Department of Health and Senior Services, held a presentation of Black Women in American Culture and History at the Truman Building in downtown Jefferson City.

This year's theme, "Black Women in American Culture and History," encouraged us to pay special tribute to the role African American women have played in shaping the character of our Nation -- often in the face of both racial and gender discrimination.

MoDOT partnered with the Department of Health and Senior Service's Office of Minority Health, and Office of Administration's Office of Equal Opportunity to organize and plan the event.

The Missouri Black Caucus paid for the lunch.

The keynote speaker was Dr. Alisa Warren. Since January 2008, she has

served as the Executive Director for the Missouri Commission on Human Rights in Jefferson City. She previously served as the Director of Diversity Initiatives for the University of Missouri.

The honoree for the event was Dr. Edna Chavis. Dr. Chavis worked with the Division of Aging from 1980 to 2003 conducting classes on aging for all new employees as one of her many tasks. During the evening hours she taught Sociology of Aging and Intro to Sociology at Lincoln University. As a skilled gerontologist, Dr. Chavis was a key force behind the origination of the Governor's Conference on Aging and is one of the foremost authorities in Missouri on the issues facing minority elders.

There was a dance performance by Lincoln University Dance Troupe entitled 'Harriet.' The Lincoln University Dance Troupe was founded in 1976 by Theresa Ferguson, who is still the Director of the Dance Troupe.

National Work Zone Awareness Week

continued from page 1

combination of a major construction project, extensive cooperation between state and local governments, environmental stewardship and construction innovation makes this a perfect location for a national event about work zone safety.

"Missouri has the opportunity to highlight a first-class construction project and show how transportation affects each and every one of us every day, whether we're talking about work zone safety, traffic flow, reducing congestion or supporting jobs."

In addition to receiving funds to help cover event costs, Missouri will receive a trophy to display for the entire year. The event will be covered by AASHTO television and recognized in national press releases by the Federal Highway Administration. The National Work Zone Memorial will also be a centerpiece of the national kick-off.

I'll be there, too, in my orange finest. Follow this and my other adventures at www.facebook.com/mobarrelbob.